

Conference Abstract

Let's Talk About Life Stage

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Abstract

The Arctos Community (Arctos) (Arctos 2024a) agrees that controlled vocabularies are the secret sauce that unlocks the power of data consistency and accessibility as evidenced by the over 100 controlled vocabularies they maintain, which can be viewed (and used) (Arctos 2024b) by anyone. One of these was age class: a controlled vocabulary meant to allow for consistent recording of values in the age class attribute, which was defined as "The age class, reproductive stage, life stage of the biological individual (e.g., juvenile, adult, eft, nymph, etc.)" (Arctos 2024c). Arctos spent over four years slogging through a discussion about age class and life stage! This process included moving terms from the age class attribute to a new life stage attribute (Arctos 2024e) and placing others in a free-text age attribute (Arctos 2024d). Examples of how this community wrestles with controlled vocabularies provide insight into the issues that arise when a diverse group of data providers and users attempt to build a controlled vocabulary that meets everyone's needs, ensures that data will be discoverable, and incorporates existing tools, such as the GBIF life stage vocabulary (Global Biodiversity Information Facility 2024). The community has encountered the difficulty of using an ontology, such as the life cycle stage ontology (UBERON 2024), and how time, money, people, and resources matter to this issue. The presentation (Suppl. material 1) will include a call for community discussion (Mayfield-Meyer 2024) centered on two questions: what resources are currently being used by the community to develop controlled vocabularies and what resources do they wish existed?

Keywords

controlled vocabulary, normalized data

Presenting author

Teresa J. Mayfield-Meyer

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Conflicts of interest

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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Supplementary material

Suppl. material 1: Let's Talk About Life Stage

Authors: Teresa J. Mayfield-Meyer

Data type: presentation

Brief description: PowerPoint Slides presented at the conference.

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